

***The Institution of Engineers, Australia: Sydney Division
Engineering Heritage Committee***

Oral History Program: Biographical Notes

**Tom CROWE (1940 -)
Civil Engineer**

- Birth & Family:** Born in Roseville in 1940. Father was a wool classer then after the war became an accountant. Has one Sister. Parents encouraged further education.
- Schooling:** Cammeray Primary School (sent too young) and later to Roseville Public School. Then onto North Sydney Boys High School
- Qualifications:** 1961? Civil Engineering - University of NSW
1969? Degree in Computer Science - Vancouver, Canada
1979 Masters Degree in Building Science – University of NSW
1984 Building Visiting Committee – University of NSW
1984 Bachelor of Urban Land – University of Western Sydney
1989 Master of Project Management -University of Technology, Sydney
- Memberships:**
- Awards:** 1987 Australian Small Business Award – Business Management
1987 BOMA Award – Project Management
1988 Engineering Excellence Award – Information Management on Development Projects (*move to left*)
1988 Building Science Forum Award
1994 Engineering Excellence Award – Project Management
1994 Engineering Excellence Award – Project Management Training
1996 Engineering Excellence Award – Best Practice (TQM) on Projects
- Work History:** First job - in last two years of university worked part-time on Gladesville Bridge. Responsible for casting the 500 concrete blocks that made up the arch – made within an eighth of an inch - tapered blocks and hollow – one wrong. Met Backie James, Chief Engineer on Spit Bridge and mentor to him for rest of his life. Worked for him from 1958 until 1968 with Reed and Mallack, British Engineering firm.
- Site Engineer at Harwood Island, Clarence River in Grafton, responsible for precasting the headstocks and erecting them.
- Returned to Sydney and got married. Worked on the Aston Street Bridge at Parramatta – his first project management role. Reed and Mallack decided to withdraw from Australia so decided to go to Vancouver, Canada to work.
- Worked for IBM as Salesman. Top salesman in first year. Lectured in critical path method (one of the main applications of computers) at the University of British Colombia.

Returned to Australia in 1970 and joined P A Management Consultants. During this time involved in programming of variety of things, including Opera House.

1973 left and formed a company in partnership with Alex McLaughlin (a colleague from PA) called McLaughlin and Crowe for ten years. First stand alone management consultant in project management in Australia.

- In early 1980s worked on AMP's Collins Place – believes first consultant project manager on a major project in Australia – a turning point in career – 38 years old and managing billion dollar building. Then project manager for another AMP building, the National Australia Bank House, George St, Sydney. By this time partnership separated and formed T W Crowe & Associates in 1983.

Introduced micro-computers to assist in project management – won an engineering excellence award for this. He invented a scientific refurbishment technique, which was applied to city buildings as well as scheduling techniques. Tom has worked in various capacities on hotels, resort project developments, hospitals, banks, the University of Technology, Sydney; and Police Headquarters. Other relevant experience includes projects in Malaysia, Hong Kong, Singapore, Indonesia in the 1980s, Collins Place Melbourne, Sydney 2000 Olympic Infrastructure and National Museum of Australia.

Management consulting in Capital Works Experience:

1980	AMP Society cost management procedures
1982–1983	State Rail Authority contract review
1984	Otis Elevator management development
1985	State Rail Authority records retrieval study
1985	State Rail Authority Capital works strategy
1986	Telecom annual report and corporate planning
1986	State Rail Authority workshops' recommendations
1987	State Rail Authority performance indicators and management control of capital works
1987	Elcom NSW project management development
1988	Peddle Thorp and Walker information technology strategy
1989	Public Works Department asset management policy for public buildings
1989	Public Works Department Schools(?) Branch business plan and programme review
1989	Concrete Constructions strategic plan for information management of projects
1989	Financial appraisal of Sydney Eye Hospital
1989-1990	Royal Agricultural Society relocation project initiation
1990	Telecom Property Services business plan
1990	State Rail Authority locomotive maintenance value study
1990-1991	Concrete Constructions information management strategy and implementation

1990	Freehill Hollingsdale Page review and recommendations on Darwin Hotel complex project development team
1990-1991	Concrete Constructions business plan for asset management and Refurbishment Division
1991	Roads and Traffic Authority NSW community consultation approach for project teams
1991	Roads and Traffic Authority NSW conceptual design of project initiation checklists, strategy for information retrieval
1991	Water Board preparation of programme and development of information management implementation strategy
1990-1991	Telecom Payphone Services establishment of project management system and culture within a matrix organisation
1991	Telecom capital works procurement strategies
1991	Roads and Traffic Authority project management guide and reporting development
1991	Water Board review of capital works priorities
1991	Property Services group project manager/teams development
1990-1991	<i>(format problem with years at left and below)</i> Roads and Traffic Authority NSW programme and project management, information management and project team skills enhancement
1990	Telecom Payphone Services project cost management review, establishing project control culture in a line management organisation
1990	Water Board project managers' skill enhancement, management reporting, information management brief

In the 1990s he was involved in developing best practice/total quality management and introducing it to organisations such as the construction industry, government departments, architects, engineers, contractors and trade contractors.

Currently completing PhD – examining achieving excellence and strategies for project deliveries. Case studies lead to the conclusion that many things are being done wrong in the industry. He is hoping that his contribution will effect change in the focus of industry from profit to people and customers.

He has lectured extensively at University of NSW, University of Technology Sydney, Sydney University and Deakin University, in project management skills. *(these need to be spely out for posterity)*

Is now semi-retired, teaching, researching and 'trying to get his handicap in golf down'.

Prepared by Freda Garnsey, 22 November 2002 from oral history interview conducted on 28 June 2001.